

CHAPTER 1

THE NAVY JOURNALIST

To the young man or woman choosing a Navy career field, whether for one enlistment or for 30 years, the journalist rating offers endless avenues for an imaginative, yet mature, thinker.

Many of the duties and responsibilities of the journalist rank among Americans' favorite hobbies and pastimes, such as writing, broadcasting and photography. The Navy journalist learns and practices a distinguished profession and becomes an official representative of the Navy in public affairs matters.

The first enlisted specialists to work full time in the field of Navy journalism were Naval Reserve personnel selected during the early years of World War II. They were designated Specialist X (Naval Correspondents). In 1948, under a major overhaul affecting almost every enlisted rating, the journalist (JO) rating was established.

MAJOR TASKS AND RESPONSIBILITIES

LEARNING OBJECTIVE: Identify the major tasks and responsibilities of the Navy journalist, the personal traits required for one to best perform the duties of the rating, the applicable NECs, and the purpose of the JO 3 & 2 training manual (TRAMAN).

In our democratic society, government depends on the consent of the governed. This important principle means that, in the long run, the United States government does only what the people want it to do. Therefore, we can have a Navy only if the people know and understand the importance of the Navy and support it.

The Navy, like the other services, depends on this country's citizens for the four key tools of its trade — personnel, money, materials and the authority to carry out its mission. As a Navy journalist, your main function will be to make the facts about your Navy available to the Navy's three main publics — the people at your ship or station, Navy people in general and the people of the United States as a whole.

Your CO is responsible for informing the Navy's publics. Your responsibility is to assist your command's public affairs officer (PAO) in accomplishing the Navy's and the command's public affairs goals.

Some of the key assignments for Navy journalists include the following:

- Writing Navy news releases and feature articles from personal interviews, examination of messages or witnessing events
- Taking and processing news photographss and writing cutlines
- Preparing material for commercial radio and television use
- Serving on the staff of an Armed Forces Radio and Television Service (AFRTS) station or Navy Broadcasting Service (NBS) detachment as an interviewer or announcer (subject to the requirements for voice quality, public speaking, presence and sense of timing)
- Preparing command histories and CO, XO and C/MC biographies
- Rewriting and localizing news releases received from the Navy Internal Relations Activity (NIRA) and other sources throughout the naval establishment
- Coordinating special events
- Editing material and preparing copy, art and layouts for the printing of Navy publications, such as ship and station newspapers, command information brochures, welcome aboard brochures, cruisebooks and fact sheets
- Assisting in the preparation of speeches and other presentations on naval topics
- Preparing material on individual Navy members for release to the Navy's Fleet Home Town News Center
- Preparing official correspondence and directives and performing other administrative functions in a public affairs office

To perform these duties well, you need to master verbal, oral and visual communication techniques. You must be a constant reader who is always abreast of current events in and out of the Navy. You must know enough about the Navy to interpret and translate its activities and actions intelligently to the civilian public. In the performance of their duties, journalists are expected to produce smooth copies of their own material. Therefore, you must be a qualified typist who meets the established standards for speed and accuracy. You also must be computer literate.

Finally, a journalist must have the ability to learn, and your main learning objective must be learning to write well. You must be better than average in your use of the English language. You must learn to write quickly, plainly and accurately. Your aim is to turn out news copy that can be used by a newspaper or radio/television station with a minimal need for editing or rewriting.

The major areas in which you will be expected to develop knowledge and skills include newswriting, editing and the layout and makeup of Navy publications. Other areas are the principles of printing, radio and television, photography and administration.

As you progress in experience, maturity and service seniority, you likely will become the trusted executive of the PAO. As such, you will find yourself performing many of the functions of a PAO. This will be particularly true if your boss is a collateral-duty PAO. Collateral duty means that the officer has other assignments that are considered primary duties. In such cases his primary responsibilities often allow only minimum time for public affairs work. Therefore, you also must learn the theory and practice of public affairs policy.

A COMMON MISPERCEPTION

There is a tendency for Navy journalists to believe they are part of America's free press and thus part of the investigative journalist corps. This notion could not be further from the truth.

The moniker "Navy journalist" is misleading because the JO is a **public information specialist** — not a free press journalist. Navy journalists are assigned to command information, public information and community relations duties. When assigned to public information staffs, Navy journalists write releases to tell the Navy story and to respond to queries by the investigative free press. When assigned to command information staffs, Navy journalists may write for civilian enterprise (CE) or funded command

newspapers — what the industry terms "in-house" publications.

Just as a writer for commercial industry would not write investigative articles concerning his company for the in-house publication, Navy journalists would not write investigatively concerning their own individual commands or the Navy. Navy journalists may tackle controversial social issues in print or on videotape, but they must avoid works that attack or injure, or that give the impression of attacking or injuring their commands or the Navy.

NEWS IN THE NAVY COMMUNITY

New Navy journalists are often confused about their role in the Navy community. Most are familiar with the print and electronic media back home. They are used to the civilian reporter investigating, or reporting on the investigation of fraud, waste or abuse in the local, county or state government.

In arriving at their first duty assignment, they find a community that seems to be somewhat similar to that of their hometown. The CO seems to be the mayor, and the chief master-at-arms represents the chief of police. The CO's staff fills the rest of the government positions. There are schools, stores, businesses and recreational services.

However, Navy journalists must learn that the CO is not so much a mayor as he is the president of a company. Likewise, the Navy community is really much like a company town. Your job within this community is to enhance morale, to increase readiness and productivity, to be the voice of the CO to his community, and to inform, educate and entertain the Navy's internal audience.

PERSONAL TRAITS

To accomplish the assignments previously mentioned, the Navy journalist must have certain personal characteristics. Some are general characteristics that contribute to success in any rating, but others are an integral part of the public affairs profession. The characteristics of appearance, voice, military bearing, courtesy and personality will become more evident as you read this TRAMAN and complete the accompanying nonresident training course (NRTC).

APPEARANCE

Good personal appearance is especially important to the Navy journalist. Most of your work will be

relatively clean in nature, so it is possible to work hard and still look neat. Since your duties place you in a position to meet visitors, escort reporters, interview VIPs, act as a tour guide, and so forth, good appearance is more necessary than in some other jobs in the Navy. Always make sure every aspect of your personal appearance, from your haircut to the edge dressing on your shoes, is first-rate.

VOICE

Voice and manner of speaking are important. You should avoid an overly loud voice, but likewise, you should avoid speaking too low or indistinctly. Localisms of vocabulary or accent maybe merely pleasant marks of individuality, or they maybe hindrances because they make the speaker hard to understand. If you have conspicuous speech habits of this sort, you should attempt to correct them. Your attention to pronunciation of words will always be worthwhile.

MILITARY BEARING

All petty officers have an obligation to conduct themselves with dignity and in such a manner as to reflect credit on the naval service. Dignity exists only where the individual has a proper sense of his own worth and of the worthiness of his cause. The person who possesses true dignity also will respect the dignity of others.

Military bearing is dignity within military relationships. It exists when the individual is proud of his military organization and of his part in it. He respects his seniors and is guided by the example of those he admires most among them. He tilso respects his juniors and tries to provide an example they will be proud to follow. Whether he is squaring his hat, rendering a salute, carrying on the work of his office, or going on liberty, his manner says that he is proud of the Navy and is doing his best to make the Navy proud of him.

COURTESY

The qualifications for advancement do not list courtesy as a requirement, but they imply it. Most situations require a certain minimum standard in terms of manners, and unless we display this standard, we are in trouble. Courtesy goes far beyond that. It is in fact totally different in character, because courtesy comes from within and is a voluntary expression of respect for the rights and feelings of others. How your job as a journalist involves your interaction with others is emphasized throughout this TRAMAN. More than any

other rating in the Navy, you will be associated primarily with people in the civilian populace. Courtesy on your part will smooth the way not only for you, but for your command, your seniors and the people who work for you.

PERSONALITY

A pleasing personality is a must in the journalist rating. You must be able to get along with your shipmates, because their cooperation is necessary before you can carry out your duties. Always strive to establish a good name for the JO community. When you have the confidence of your shipmates, your job will be 100 percent easier.

NAVY ENLISTED CLASSIFICATIONS

Navy Enlisted Classifications (NECs) are four-digit numbers that indicate special qualifications earned by an individual. Currently, there are four NECs available to Navy journalists, as described in the following text.

JO-3221 — BROADCAST OPERATIONS SPECIALIST

The holder of a 3221 NEC originates, prepares and broadcasts command information for use on radio, television, satellite or Shipboard Information, Training and Entertainment (SITE) systems. Additionally, he acts as a researcher, writer, interviewer, narrator, broadcast equipment operator, program scheduler and director.

If you desire this NEC, you must complete the Basic Broadcaster Course (BBC) at the Defense Media Institute (DMI), formerly the Defense Information School (DINFOS). You also may earn the classification by logging one year of documented experience at an NBS detachment or AFRTS outlet or on a SITE-equipped ship. If you have equivalent civilian experience, you may request a waiver of the one year experience requirement.

JO-3251 — BROADCAST OPERATIONS DIRECTOR

Individuals with this NEC direct the operations of radio, television, satellite, cable and SITE support systems as coordinated elements of the command information broadcasting function. Other key tasks include conducting research and planning programming, production, budgeting, training and maintenance.

This NEC could be part of your long-range career planning. You may earn it by graduating from the Broadcast Managers Course (BMC) at the DMI or by completing at least two previous management assignments with AFRTS activities.

PH-8147— PHOTOJOURNALISM SPECIALIST

Although this is primarily a photographer's mate NEC, members of the JO rating also may earn it. Sailors with this NEC cover and photograph events of news or documentary interest, while supporting and effectively meeting the public affairs objectives and programs of the military services. They apply layout and design principles, news and feature writing, basic and advanced photographic techniques and production, and demonstrate writing and photographic skills.

To earn this NEC, you must first complete the eight-week Intermediate Photojournalism Course (IPC) offered at the DMI (JO "B" School), then perform as a photojournalist in the field for one year. Your CO must forward an endorsement to the DMI before the NEC is approved and awarded

PH-8148— PHOTOJOURNALIST

Sailors with the PH-8148 NEC photograph newsworthy events, prepare photography in news form, write captions and text for news stories, and maintain liaison with their counterparts in the news media. They also train personnel in photojournalism techniques.

You can earn this NEC by applying for acceptance to PH/JO "C" School at the Rochester Institute of Technology. This fully accredited curriculum includes a minimum of 18 semester hours (30 quarter hours) of advanced photojournalism techniques and practices, including picture editing, newswriting and reporting, feature article writing, graphic arts, layouts, design, ethics in journalism, and many others. The NEC is awarded after your successful completion of the course.

You may obtain further information on all four NECs by consulting the *Manual of Navy Enlisted Manpower and Personnel Classifications and Occupational Standards, Volume II (Navy Enlisted Classifications)*, NAVPERS 18068F.

TRAMAN PURPOSE

The purpose of this TRAMAN is ensure the quality and integrity of Navy journalist training and to help you meet the basic requirements for advancement to J03 and J02. It is based on the most current (at the time of this writing) journalist occupational standards (OCCSTDS) in the *Advancement Handbook for Petty Officers (JO)*. Since OCCSTDS change periodically, be sure you check with your Educational Services Office (ESO) for the most up-to-date OCCSTDS.

This TRAMAN will not make you an accomplished writer or a public affairs specialist overnight, but it can help. It contains many useful rules and tips that, if you learn and practice, will lead you down the path of success in one of the most exciting and rewarding ratings in the U.S. Navy.